UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/54/728
S/2000/66
28 January 2000

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 63
QUESTION OF CYPRUS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fifth year

Letter dated 27 January 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 27 January 2000 addressed to you by His Excellency Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 63, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volkan VURAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Letter dated 27 January 2000 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 3 January 2000 (A/54/698-S/2000/4) addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations, which contains allegations of "violations of the airspace of the Republic".

It will be recalled that similar allegations of so-called "airspace violations" were rejected in our previous communications addressed to you, most recently in my letter dated 22 December 1999 (A/54/694-S/1999/1281, annex). I wish to reiterate that flights within the sovereign airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State, over which the Greek Cypriot administration in the South has no jurisdiction or any right of say whatsoever.

As stated in my previous letters, these Greek Cypriot allegations are based on the false and unacceptable assumption that the sovereignty of the Greek Cypriot side extends over the entire island. This position is contrary to the current realities in the island, namely, the existence of two sovereign peoples and their respective states and, as such, is a major impediment to finding a comprehensive settlement on the basis of these realities.

In addition to its above-mentioned unrealistic and negative stance, the Greek Cypriot administration is also continuing with its military build-up in South Cyprus, which has already reached unprecedented levels.

The Greek Cypriot daily Politis on 10 December 1999 reported that the necessary funds would shortly be released by the Greek Cypriot House of Representatives Defence Committee for the purchase of 40 Russian-made T-80U tanks and an unspecified number of KA-50 helicopters. Reportedly, the planned purchase of BUK-M1 or BUK-M2 missile systems was also taken up by the said Committee. In this connection, the Greek Cypriot daily Fileleftheros on 9 January 2000 reported that the acquisition of such systems was among the issues taken up during the recent visit of the Greek Cypriot Minister of Defence, Sokrates Hasikos, to the Russian Federation from 2 to 6 December 1999. Simerini on 11 January 2000 further reported that 21 short-range TOR-MI missile systems acquired by Greece from the Russian Federation would be transported to South Cyprus, in addition to the 15 such systems already deployed in South Cyprus.

Defense News, a weekly published in the United States of America, directly quoting Greek Cypriot official sources, reported on 20 December 1999 that South Cyprus would "acquire more T-80 tanks and BMP-3 armoured vehicles from Russia to reinforce its ground forces" in addition to missile systems. A commentary in the same issue underlined that the efforts by the Greek Cypriot administration to acquire these systems and other ground weaponry should be discouraged as it would rekindle tensions and hinder chances for reconciliation.

Unfortunately, the Greek Cypriot administration has long been ignoring such sound advice and is relentlessly pursuing a campaign of militarization.

On the eve of the resumption of proximity talks under your auspices, it is hoped that the hostile and provocative military preparations as well as the misinformation campaign conducted by the Greek Cypriot side against the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus will end, so that the efforts to find a comprehensive settlement will not be undermined.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 63, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern CYPRUS